



## **WINTER WEATHER HANDLING SPORT UTILITY VEHICLES ON SLICK ROADS**

While sport utility vehicles perform well on many difficult driving conditions, drivers of these popular vehicles still need to exercise caution to help ensure safe winter driving.

Many sport utility drivers feel immune to winter driving hazards. Fundamental safety rules need to be followed for safe driving on slick and snowy roads.

While the higher ground clearance and 4-wheel drive might help SUV owners get going in heavy snow, those special features do not help stop the vehicle. Drivers still need to slow down and increase the distance between vehicles when driving on slick roads.

It is also important to know if a sport utility vehicle has anti-lock brakes so that proper braking techniques can be used.

When making a quick stop in vehicles with anti-lock brakes, maintain firm and constant pressure on the brake pedal. If your vehicle does not have anti-lock brakes, pump the brakes to avoid locking the wheels and losing control of the vehicle.

SUV owners need to realize that their vehicles have different handling characteristics than other passenger vehicles.

The higher center of gravity on some SUVs can make them more prone to roll over during sharp turning. Special care is needed to handle SUVs safely.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, sport utility vehicles have the highest rollover rate of any vehicle type in fatal crashes - 37 percent as compared with 25 percent for pick-ups, 19 percent for vans, and 15 percent for passenger cars. SUVs also have the highest rollover rate in injury crashes.

It is recommended that drivers operating SUVs on slick roads for the first time find a deserted parking lot to practice braking and steering.

*Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division  
This weather information obtained from Ice Pack, a group of public and private agencies  
in Illinois and Indiana*